

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EP 112 Feathers

By: Jorge Cham and Daniel Whiteson

Elinor's Question: Why do birds have feathers?

Logline: The kids learn that birds' feathers help them fly and keep warm and give them color.

Curriculum Goals:

- LS2d: Explore how different external features of an animal help it survive in its environment (The function of birds' feathers)
- ND2: Begin to understand that systems developed in our world often work in similar ways to systems found in the natural world (feathers and clothes work in similar ways)
- SEP1a: Demonstrate curiosity about the greater world outside of their local environment [why do birds have feathers?]

SEP4a: a. Collect, describe, and record observations in greater detail and in various ways.

MAIN CHARACTERS - Elinor, Ari, Olive, Ms. Mole

SECONDARY CHARACTERS - None.

PROPS: Feather, cap, sand-castle, three jackets for Elinor, Ari and Olive, Notebook

LINE COUNT - 116

FIRST DRAFT: 19-Feb-19

SECOND DRAFT: 06-March-19

It's a typical clear morning in the forest. We open on some BIRDS chirping and hopping from branch to branch in the treetops. They are singing to each other cheerfully when, suddenly, they hear a faint whistling coming from the distance. The birds get curious and look over to see what is making that sound.

*

1

2

3

*
*

*

5

He plays with it, striking a few funny poses: he fans himself with it; he tickles himself, <GIGGLING> a bit; he points at the trees with it.

6 ARI (CONT'D) 6
 <GIGGLES> You're my new lucky
 feather!

He sticks the feather in his cap, thinking it's pretty awesome.

7 ARI (CONT'D) 7
 I can't wait to show Elinor and
 Olive!

He walks the rest of the way to school with a happy swagger.

2. EXT PLAYGROUND - DAY

Open on Elinor playing in the sandbox with Olive. They are building a sand castle together. School hasn't started and kids are playing in the playground. ELINOR is wearing a RAINCOAT. Elinor pats down the last little bit of sand unto the center tower of their sand castle as Olive leans back and brushes off her hands. *

8 ELINOR 8
 There!

9 OLIVE 9
 Nice!

They both stand up and take a step back to admire their work.

10 ELINOR 10
 What do you think, Olive?

11 OLIVE 11
 I think our sand castle came out pretty well, Elinor. *

12 ELINOR 12
 Hmm, although... it doesn't look done yet. *
 *

13 OLIVE 13
 Really?

At that moment, we see Ari enter the playground in the background. We switch to his perspective as he scans the playground. He spots Elinor and Olive and gets excited.

14 ARI 14
 There they are!

He runs over to the sandbox. BACK ON: Elinor and Olive discussing their castle.

15 OLIVE 15
What do you think it needs?

16 ELINOR 16
I don't know... I just feel like
it's missing something.

Ari comes up to within a few paces of the sandbox, then stops so he can make a proper entrance. He checks the feather and adjusts his hat just so, then strolls nonchalantly in front of Elinor and Olive's view.

17 OLIVE 17
What if we add a tower?

18 ELINOR 18
Mmm, I don't think we need another
one.

Ari makes it to the other side, but Elinor and Olive don't seem to notice him. He seems a bit disappointed but then rallies to try again. This time, he walks with his head tilted towards them, as he takes big waltzing steps, sweeping his arms back and forth.

19 ELINOR (CONT'D) 19
Maybe we could add more windows?

20 OLIVE 20
Hmmm...

Still nothing. Ari makes it to the other side and puts his hands on his hips. BACK ON: Olive and Elinor.

21 ELINOR 21
Or maybe we need a flag?

22 OLIVE 22
That would be nice! Something
bright and colorful?

Suddenly, Ari runs back in frame, and uses a flap of his wings to make a dramatic TA DA! Landing right in front of them. He shakes his head in their direction, pointing at his hat with his fingers.

23 ARI 23
AHEM!

24 ELINOR 24
Oh, hi Ari!

25 OLIVE 25
When did you get here?

26	ARI	26	
	I...<beat> Nevermind. Hi, Elinor!		
	Hi, Olive! Notice anything extra cool about me today?		
27	ELINOR	27	
	Is that a new shirt.		*
	DESIGN NOTE: It's NOT a new shirt.		*
28	OLIVE	28	
	It's a nice color.		*
29	ARI	29	
	No, you guys! Look! On my hat!		
30	ELINOR	30	
	Whoa... Is that a feather?		
31	OLIVE	31	
	Cool! It's so bright and colorful. Where did you get it?		
32	ARI	32	
	Well, let me tell you!		
	Ari recreates the earlier scene, with dramatic flair.		
33	ARI (CONT'D)	33	
	I was walking in the forest, when suddenly, I hear something moving up in the trees! And THEN, this feather came floating down, and it landed right on my head!		
34	OLIVE	34	
	Wow, how lucky! A bird feather!		*
35	ARI	35	
	It IS lucky! I call it my lucky feather!		
36	ELINOR	36	
	Can I see it?		*
	Elinor puts it between her ears, holding it there by pinching her ears together and doing a twirl. She <GIGGLES>.		
37	OLIVE	37	
	Ooh, my turn!		
	Olive holds it with her trunk and pretends to write with it. The kids <LAUGH>.		

38	ELINOR	38	
	It's really pretty.		
	Olive blows the feather up in the air with her trunk and it settles in Elinor's hands.		
	SCIENCE CU MOMENT: We zoom into the feather and see its intricate structure and shape and colors.		
39	ELINOR (CONT'D)	39	
	Wow, it looks like it has little brush hairs!		* *
	She runs her finger along the edge of the feather, and we see the different hairs part.		
40	ARI	40	
	I didn't notice that!		*
41	ELINOR	41	
	That is SO INTERESTING!		
42	OLIVE	42	
	And there are so many colors!		
	Ari takes a closer look at his own fur.		*
43	ARI	43	
	It would be cool if WE had feathers.		* *
	Olive and Elinor look at their skin/fur too.		
44	ELINOR	44	
	I wonder, why DO birds have feathers?		*
	Olive takes the feather to get a closer look.		*
45	OLIVE	45	
	Good question, Elinor. Hmmm...		
	The kids ponder for a second.		
46	OLIVE (CONT'D)	46	
	I know! Maybe birds use their feathers to tickle each other?		* *
	A THOUGHT BUBBLE forms next to Olive, and we see a bird tickling another bird with their wing feather.		
	The bubble pops and Olive uses the feather to tickle Elinor gently. Elinor <GIGGLES>.		*

47	ARI	47	
	Wait! My parents have pillows with feathers in them.		
Olive gives the feather to Ari. A THOUGHT BUBBLE appears next to Ari. We see a bird tucked in bed, using its wings as a pillow to sleep on.			
48	ARI (CONT'D)	48	
	Maybe birds have feathers to sleep on them?		
49	ELINOR	49	
	Hmmmm.		*
The kids think for a beat.			*
50	OLIVE	50	
	It's a mystery. Why do birds have feathers?		*
51	ELINOR	51	
	I have an idea! Let's go look for some birds and see if we can figure it out!		*
52	OLIVE	52	
	Yes! I'll get my notepad!		
53	ELINOR	53	
	We need... MORE OBSERVATIONS!		

Elinor and Olive run off. Ari looks at the feather and tucks it just right back on his hat. He strolls off confidently strutting it.

3. EXT FOREST - DAY

The kids go look for birds in the nearby trees. We can see the playground in the background. We can hear indistinct <BIRD CHIRPING> from different directions.

54	OLIVE	54	
	There sure are lots of birds around here!		
55	ELINOR	55	
	Let's watch them!		

We hear the beginning of a song. During the song, we see the kids watching birds and singing a song:

56	ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI	56	*
	Why do birds have feathers? Let's find out together!		*
	<i>We'll find some birds, and take a look We'll draw what we notice In our book!</i>		*
	Why do birds have feathers? Let's find out together!		
	<i>Flying high, and singing loud! We'll find answers all around!</i>		*
	Why do birds have feathers? Let's find out together!		

As the song wraps up, we see each kid going off in a different direction (but they are within eyeshot of each other and the playground).

END SONG.

4. EXT. FOREST - ARI'S CORNER OF THE WOODS, CONTINUOUS

Ari walks around, looking around for birds. He sees a bird on a branch of a nearby tree. He runs and flaps his wings to fly up to the branch on the opposite side of the tree.

57	ARI	57	*
	Hey, little birdie! We're trying to figure out what your feathers are for. Can you tell me?		*

The bird chirps at him <SFX: Bird chirping> and flies away to the next tree. Ari follows.

58	ARI (CONT'D)	58
	Hold up!	

The bird chirp again and opens its wings to fly away again. Ari opens his wings to fly also then stops, realizing something. He looks closer at the bird's wing and see that it is made out of feathers.

59	ARI (CONT'D)	59
	Hmm, you have wings just like I do. But yours are made out of feathers.	

He gets excited.

60	ARI (CONT'D)	60	
	I think I figured it out! Birds have feathers to help them fly!		* *

He flaps his wings and hovers a little.

61	ARI (CONT'D)	61
	I can't wait to tell Elinor and Olive!	

5. EXT FOREST - OLIVE'S CORNER, CONTINUOUS

Cut to Olive, who is standing under a tree watching two Bluejays. The ribbon on her head is a bit untied.

62	OLIVE	62
	You two birds are really colorful!	

The birds are preening themselves, arranging their feathers.

63	OLIVE (CONT'D)	63
	I wonder if you like being blue. It's MY favorite color.	

She notices that the ribbon on her head has come undone a bit, so she ties it back up with her trunk. *

64	OLIVE (CONT'D)	64
	Oops, there we go. That looks better.	

She looks back up at the blue jays.

65	OLIVE (CONT'D)	65
	You wear blue on your head too!	

Olive looks like she's had an idea, and doodles in her notebook.

66	OLIVE (CONT'D)	66
	I think I figured it out! Feathers are for being colorful! I can't wait to tell Ari and Elinor.	

6. EXT FOREST - ELINOR'S CORNER, CONTINUOUS

Cut to Elinor: who is watching some ducks next to a small pond.

67	ELINOR	67
	Ooh, pretty ducks!	

She gets closer and sees that there are duck parents and duck babies.

68 ELINOR (CONT'D) 68
It's a whole duck family!

She crouches down near the ducks.

69 ELINOR (CONT'D) 69
Hello, duck family! Can you tell me
why birds have feathers?

A baby duck waddles over closer to Elinor. We see that the babies have cozy soft feathers. The parents have shiny colorful feathers above and cozy feathers underneath.

70 ELINOR (CONT'D) 70
The babies have such soft cozy
feathers. They look all snuggled up
and warm. *

She looks like she's made a realization.

71 ELINOR (CONT'D) 71
I think I figured it out! Birds use
feathers to stay warm! I can't wait
to tell Ari and Olive!

72 72

7. EXT PLAYGROUND - DAY *

Open on the playground with different kids in the background and MS. MOLE to one side. Elinor, Ari and Olive all run into the scene and at the same time.

73 ARI/ELINOR/OLIVE 73
Hey guys, I figured it out!

They all pause in surprise and then say:

74 ARI/ELINOR/OLIVE (CONT'D) 74
Feathers are for flying / Feathers
are for staying warm/ Feathers are
for color!

75 ELINOR 75
Wait guys, one at a time!

Ms. Mole walks closer so that she can listen.

76	ARI	76	
	Ok, I'll go first. I think birds need feathers to help them fly! Their wings are made of feathers!		* *
77	ELINOR / OLIVE	77	
	Yeah / That makes sense.		
Ms. Mole is listening closely.			
78	OLIVE	78	
	But wait. I have a different idea. I saw birds that had bright blue feathers. I think birds use feathers so they can be colorful.		*
She points with her trunk to the ribbon on her head.			
79	ELINOR / ARI	79	
	Right / Mmmm hmmm.		
Ms. Mole nods to herself.			
80	ELINOR	80	
	But I have a different idea, too! I saw a duck family coming out of the water, and their feathers were like a snuggly coat. I think birds use feathers to stay warm.		*
81	OLIVE / ARI	81	
	Ok / That also makes sense.		
Ms. Mole smiles at that.			
82	ARI	82	
	But definitely flying is the MOST important. That MUST be why birds have feathers.		
83	OLIVE	83	
	But if birds didn't have colorful feathers they would all look the same! I think birds have feathers to have color.		
84	ELINOR	84	
	I don't know. If they didn't have feathers, they would get so cold! So I think feathers are to stay warm.		
85	ARI	85	
	We have three good answers!		

86	OLIVE	86	
	Which one is the real reason why		*
	birds have feathers?		*
87	ELINOR	87	
	Hmm... How can we figure it out?		
	At that moment, Ms. Mole chimes in.		
88	MS MOLE	88	
	Do you little scientists mind if I		
	ask you a few questions?		
89	ELINOR	89	
	Sure, Ms Mole!		
90	MS MOLE	90	
	Ari, that's a nice hat. Why did you		*
	pick that one today?		
	He looks a bit confused by the change in topic but is happy		*
	to brag about his hat.		
91	ARI	91	
	Um.... Thanks! It's my favorite and		*
	it keeps me warm!		*
92	MS MOLE	92	
	So you chose your hat to keep you		*
	warm?		*
93	ARI	93	
	Yeah. Also, it has a secret pocket		*
	for snacks!		
	He pulls a small fruit out of a hidden pocket.		*
94	MS MOLE	94	
	Olive, what about you? Why did you		*
	choose that shirt and that skirt?		*
	Olive looks down at her blue outfit.		*
95	OLIVE	95	
	Well, blue is my favorite color, of		*
	course!		*
96	MS MOLE	96	
	So you chose your clothes because		*
	of the color?		*
97	OLIVE	97	
	Mmm-hmm. I love blue!		*

98	MS MOLE	98	
	And what about you Elinor? Why did you choose that jacket?		* *
99	ELINOR	99	
	It looked like it might rain this morning, so I picked this raincoat.		* *
100	MS MOLE	100	
	So you chose it to stay dry?		*
101	ELINOR	101	
	That's right, Ms Mole.		
102	MS MOLE	102	
	So, you all picked different clothes to wear. Now tell me, what are the clothes that we wear for?		* * *
103	ELINOR	103	
	To stay dry!		
104	ARI	104	*
	To stay warm!		
105	OLIVE	105	*
	To show colors!		*
106	MS MOLE	106	
	So, which is it? Is there just one answer?		
The kids look like they understand.			
107	ARI / ELINOR / OLIVE	107	
	They are ALL the right answer!		
108	MS MOLE	108	
	That's right! Sometimes there's more than one right answer! Your clothes help you for many reasons, just like feathers help birds in lots of ways.		* * *
109	ELINOR	109	
	I get it!		*
110	OLIVE	110	
	There's more than one reason why birds have feathers!		*

```

111                ARI                                111
    Yeah! Birds have feathers to fly                *
    AND to be colorful AND to stay
    warm.

```

112 ELINOR 112
We were ALL right!

113 MS MOLE 113
Alright, alright, alright!

The kids are excited and dance around to celebrate their moment of understanding. As Ari dances, the feather flies out of his cap and lands on his hands. Suddenly, he realizes something.

114	ARI	114
	Wait, I thought of one more thing	
	feathers are good for.	

He runs off screen, and Olive and Elinor follow him.

We cut to a close up of Elinor and Olive's sand castle, and zoom out to see Ari putting the feather right smack on the top of the center tower. It looks great!

115	ARI (CONT'D)	115
	They're also good for finishing	*
	sand castles!	

The kids and Ms. Mole all have a good <LAUGH> as we pull out and pan up to see some birds flying by as we...

FADE OUT.

THE END. *